

# Icecrypt S3500HDCCI



TELE-satellite Magazine  
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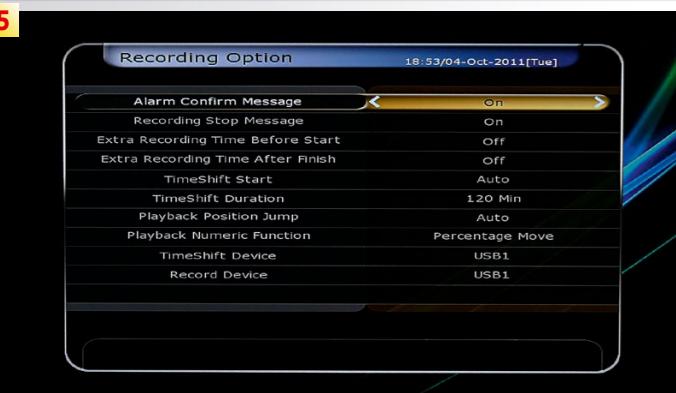
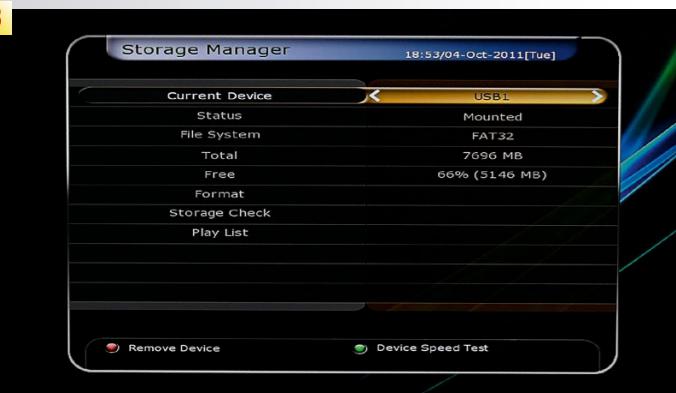
- extremely tiny but fully equipped Linux receiver
- includes a sophisticated blindscan mode
- less than 1 second for FTA channel zapping
- can be upgraded with lots of useful applications
- uses a very powerful chipset



ICECRYPT



Icecrypt S3500HDCCI  
Extremely small and  
extremely powerful



the receiver: single, universal or unicable. Of course, all LOFs are supported.

There are no fewer but five channel search modes: Automatic, Manual, Advanced, Fast and Blindscan. Automatic scan is a most common search mode based on the factory preprogrammed satellite and transponder data. There are 162 satellites available from all over the world!

In the unlikely event that the satellite you are looking for is not on the list, you can add it manually as there are four user defined positions added at the bottom of the list. The Manual search mode let you choose a specific transponder to search. The Advanced mode is similar to Manual but you can define audio, video PIDs and detect in this way normally hidden channels. The Fast mode is a search dedicated for a particular satellite provider. Presently S3500HDCCI has two possibilities here: Canal Digital and TV Vlaanderen.

The most exciting mode is naturally the blindscan. The receiver scans the frequency band and tries to detect transponders without referring to any preprogrammed transponders data. In this way, it can discover also the brand new transponders that did not operate when the manufacturer was releasing the firmware and created satellite and transponder data for S3500HDCCI. There is no need to scan always the entire band in both polarizations. The receiver allows you to specify narrower frequency range and choose polarization.

The Automatic search of ASTRA satellite on 19.2° East took 3 minutes and 45 seconds with the network option

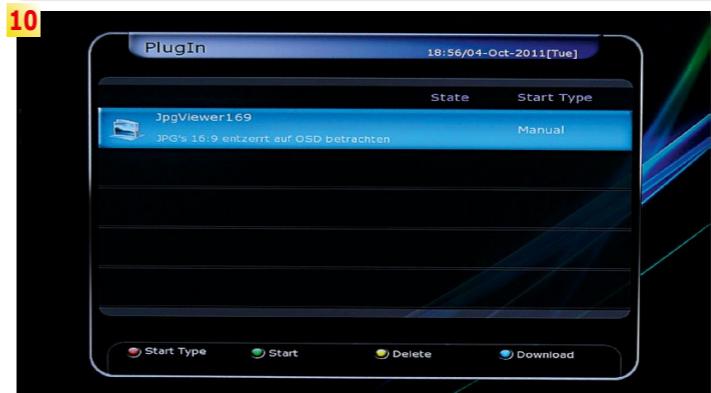
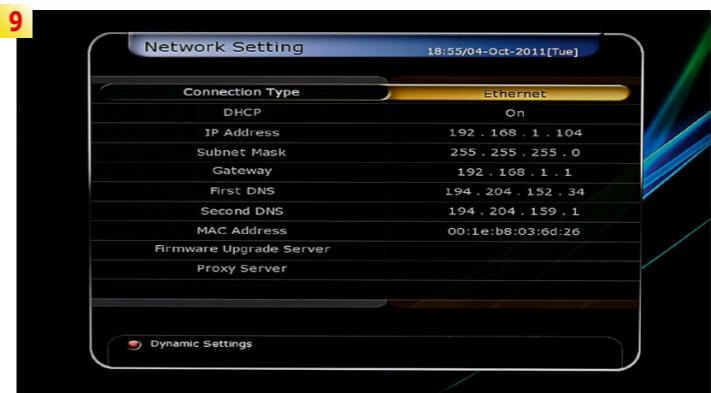
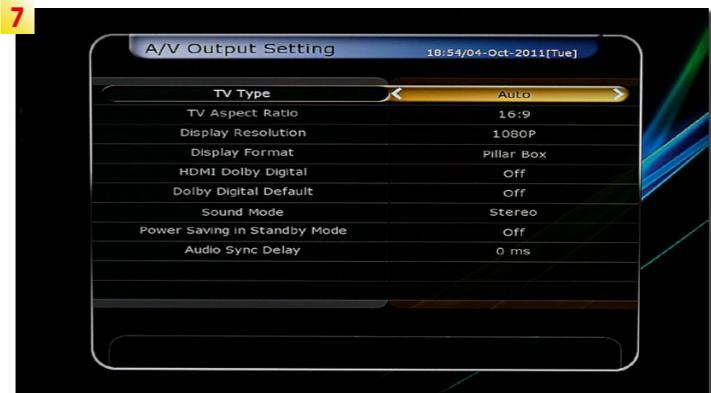
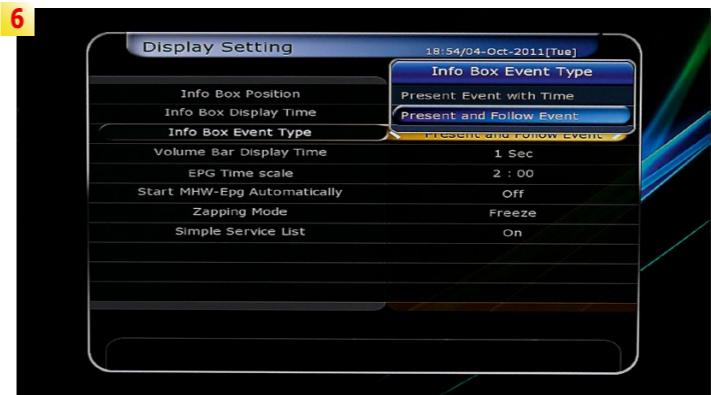
1. Configuration menu
2. Installation menu
3. Storage Manager
4. Service List Manager
5. Recording Options

turned off. The S3500HDCCI found 894 TV services and 221 radio services. When we turned the Network option on, the channel search time increased to 6 minutes and 20 seconds but the box was able to find 21 additional TV services. The scan ended up with 915 TV and 221 radio channels.

After testing the Automatic search mode, we did the reset to factory defaults and started the Blindscan. We set the receiver to scan the whole band and both polarizations. We were prepared for quite a long wait but to our great surprise, S3500HDCCI was through after merely 10 minutes and 15 seconds. It announced it had found 918 TV and 221 radio channels. The results are impressive. Icrypted box did a really good job!

We searched a number of other satellites using our DiSEqC motorized dish as well as DiSEqC switches: 1x4 and 1x8. Everything worked perfectly. Occasionally, S3500HDCCI halted during a channel search and we had to restart the scan. However, this did not cause any loss of previously stored channels.

Channel zapping is fast and pleasant in S3500HDCCI: less than one second for the FTA channels and a little longer for the scrambled channels what is natural as descrambling takes extra time. An information box that appears right after a channel change is clearly designed and apart from the typical data, it can show you something extra. If set so in the Display menu, the information box shows you not only the title and start and end times of the present event but also the title and start and end times of the following event. It might at first sound as a negligible improvement but after a very short time of using it, you feel so comfortable with



this feature that you do not ever want to switch back to traditional an information box with only present event shown. Other satellite receivers offer you a possibility to see the future event after pressing right arrow. But if you love channel zapping, the Icrypted solution saves you time and increases the pleasure of playing with your receiver.

Another improvement is the ability to set the audio volume as normal, increased or decreased for every channel independently. Every satellite fan will appreciate this feature. Thanks to that you can zap channels more comfortably without any fear that suddenly you will wake up the whole house by entering a channel with unnaturally high audio level. Once you pinpoint such channel, you set its audio to be 30% down and every next time you visit the channel its audio is somewhat muted. It also works the other way - if you find a channel with too low audio, you can set it individually to be played 30% louder.

The pleasure of operating the S3500HDCCI is additionally increased due to trick modes it offers: picture in picture and mosaic picture. Picture in picture lets you easily choose a channel to monitor in an inset, interchange the main and the monitored channel or show them in equal size side by side. And everything with just a single button press. The mosaic shows you 12 frozen screenshots of 12 different channels (assuming there are 12 or more on the current transponder) and one channel active in the middle.

6. Info box can be set to show present and following events
7. A/V Output Settings
8. Dish Settings
9. Network Settings
10. We installed the free JpgViewer plugin downloaded from the Internet

With the arrow buttons you navigate among the screenshots deciding which channel you want to see live.

An interesting solution - not so popular in other receivers - is regarding channels from a single satellite like one of the favorite lists. For example, you can have the favorite lists: Drama, Sports, News, but also Astra 19.2° E and Hotbird 13° E. Thank to this, you do not need to have an extra button on the remote called SAT or something like that. We like this approach and recommend the other manufacturers to adopt this idea.

EPG works in two modes: grid mode and list mode. The grid mode is a table in which a channel name is shown in the first column while the channel events are shown as rectangles in the same line, to the right of the channel name. The length of the rectangle is proportional to the event duration. The list mode shows the event titles of the present channel listed one below the other. While the grid mode is more convenient when making decisions what to watch on which channel right now or in the near future, the list mode is quicker when you want to find a favorite event in the more distant future. EPG S3500HDCCI allows you not only to mark an event for automatic recording but also to set a reminder. If you do so, three minutes before the start of the chosen event, you will see a message telling you that in three minutes your receiver will tune to the other channel to present you the event.

All channel edition functions that you may ever need are there. You can delete, move, or copy a channel to one of many favorite lists and so on. And also here you have a feeling that the user interface has been thought

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over profoundly. There are no unnecessary button presses required. If you want to move or delete a bigger number of channels, it does not take you that long as in the other receiver models. Excellent job!

Not only during channel edition but also in normal viewing, when you invoke the channel list with the OK button, you have plenty of possibilities to sort channels and search for specific channel or provider names. At the beginning, it may look a little bit confusing – that many options you have. Fortunately, everything is so logical that you master handling your receiver in a short time. And because the S3500HDCCI is exceptionally fast, running even more complex functions that require a lot of navigation over menu structure is as immediate as simple functions in other receivers.

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Speaking about the menu, as soon as you enter it, you realize how configurable your S3500HDCCI is. The list of things is very long – you can get a good feeling on what you can do with this receiver by looking at the screenshots we did for you. Even such small things like the timeout of the volume adjustment bar graph can be adjusted. Satellite fans will be delighted having that many possibilities at their fingertips.

And as we are at the customization, we would like to remind you that the Icecrypt receiver is Linux based. This means that you are able to install plugins and add-ons developed for this and similar receivers. Not every plugin developed for Linux based

11. Free TV+ lets you choose from YouTube and Earth Touch services
12. Searching Queen clips on YouTube
13. Service List
14. Searching specific service on the list
15. Satellites are regarded as a kind of a favorite list

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receiver will work on every model so some experimenting may be necessary. Among the most exciting possibilities is the web browser. We installed a viewer for JPG files. That's because on our TV-set, the S3500HDCCI tended to display 4:3 JPG photos stretched unnaturally to a 16:9 aspect ratio. To get correct proportions, we had to degrade video resolution to 576p. The plugin solved the problem for high video resolutions. All our photos are shown correctly now. That's a small example how useful a plugin can be. Where to find plugins? The most convenient way is to start with the Internet forums dedicated to Icecrypt receivers and then explore the forums for other Linux based receivers. As we noted, some plugins originally developed and tested for the other receiver brands will also work when installed on S3500HDCCI.

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Many plugins require connection to Internet. Achieving this with the S3500HDCCI is simple: you only need a router supporting DHCP. Everything goes automatically. However, if you wish, you can configure your connection manually. But this is not all. The receiver can connect with a Wi-Fi network via an external USB device. It is somewhat slower than a cable connection but if you do not have a PC network available in your living room – that can be the only option. Consult the user manual for compatible USB devices.

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Icecrypt box has a USB port as well as all required buttons on its remote control, so it must be ready for PVR operation. And indeed, not only regular recording and time-shift functions are provided. You can record as many as three channels at the same time while watching two others (using PIP function for example). Of

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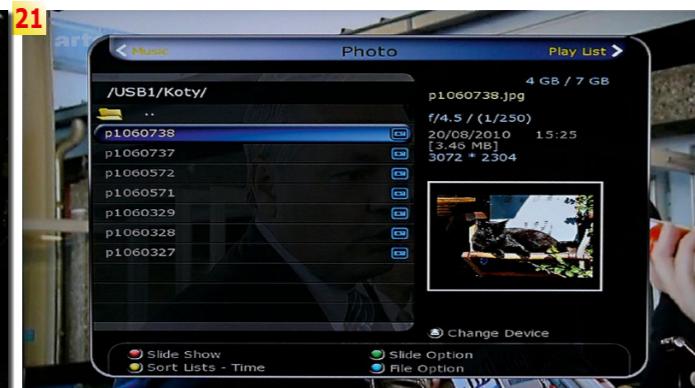
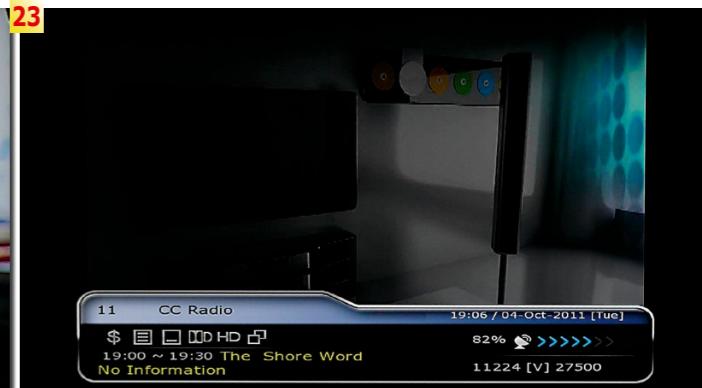


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course, one can take full advantage of such great performance having not one but two tuners. If you think you might be needing concurrent recording and watching channels from different transponders, you should think of another Icerecrypt model – the two tuner STC6000HD PVR that we presented recently in TELE-satellite 10-11/2011.

Actually, when we turned on the small S3500HDCCI, we had the impression of a déjà vu. The OSD looked pretty much the same as in STC6000HD PVR. OK, we said to ourselves, that's a reasonable approach to reuse thousands of lines of software code for the next product. But will this software work fast enough in this small box, presumably with

simpler and cheaper chipset? And as you already know, it worked as fast as in its bigger brother. Evidently, the chipset is not any simpler and cheaper. That's why we titled our report as we did. You take a seat in a small Mini Morris, press the pedal and you get flattened by acceleration produced by its engine. Evidently, this is not what you expect from a small and apparently lower performance product. S3500HDCCI by no means can be named low performance. On the contrary, this is the top class product stripped from the second tuner, VFD display and a few interfaces that did not fit on a small rear panel. But the speed and power are unchanged.

Even the remote controls

are interchangeable between the two models. For some people who would love to have not one but more Icerecrypt receivers in their A/V cabinet this may be a problem. But for a vast majority of users, this problem is only theoretical.

All the reception tests we did proved that S3500HDCCI has a very sensitive tuner and can deal with very weak signals as well as signals with small and high symbol rates. Sometimes when you switch to a low symbol rate channel, like 2000 kbps, you have to wait longer before you can watch it. It is not one second but 3-4 seconds before the receiver locks to the signal. This happens also in other receiver brands as most of the receivers are optimized for higher symbol rates.

Except for a small problem with the aspect ratio of photographs when watched in high resolution settings, we did not encounter any problems when dealing with multimedia. MP3 files as well as AVI and MPG files were played back correctly, not to mention of course the playback of recordings done with the receiver. It is very con-

- 16. EPG – grid mode
- 17. PIP mode works perfect for HD channels
- 18. Mosaic View
- 19. Simple Service List
- 20. Selecting soundtrack
- 21. Picture viewer
- 22. A recorded file is about to be played
- 23. Radio channel

venient to connect an external USB HDD and keep there all your multimedia files.

Before we end this report, we would like to mention one important feature of the box. This is the power saving mode. Normally, when this mode is not activated, the receiver consumes about 10 Watts in normal operation and 5 Watts in standby. Switching from standby to operate takes only 4 seconds. But when you activate in the menu the option called "Power saving", the power consumed in standby drops almost to zero (well below 1 Watt). The receiver consumes almost no electric energy. Naturally, it has to take longer to wake up from such a deep standby. And this is 35 seconds. It is up to the user, but we think that many of them will choose to be eco-friendly and turn this option on.

## Expert Opinion



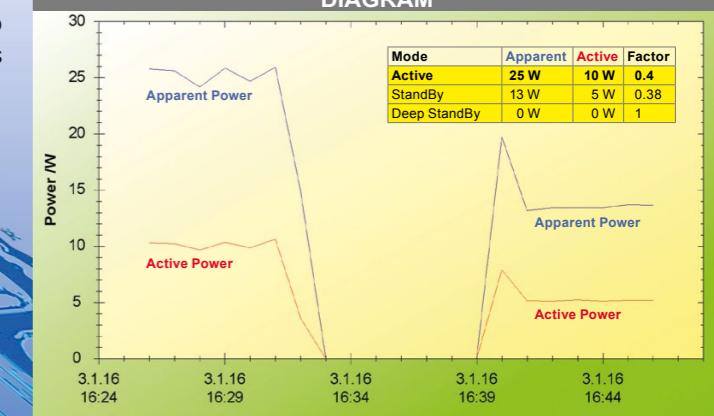
Extremely powerful and fast HD PVR receiver matching the top class models. Almost endless configuration options but still very user friendly. 1080p video output. All DiSEqC protocols. Very good video and audio quality. Small power consumption and extremely eco-friendly power saving mode.

It can halt occasionally during channel scans and you have to restart the scan then.

## TECHNICAL DATA

Manufacturer	Icerecrypt, Great Britain
Fax	01795 427 666
E-mail	info@icerecrypt.com
Web page	www.icerecrypt.com
Model	S3500HDCCI
Function	HD PVR enabled satellite receiver
Input Signal Standards	DVB-S/DVB-S2, MPEG2 and MPEG4
Input Frequency	950 ~ 2150 MHz
Symbol Rates	2-67.5 Ms/sec for DVB-S and 2-52.5 Ms/sec for DVB-S2
DiSEqC	1.0, 1.1, 1.2
Audio	AC-3 Dolby Digital and MPEG 1 Layer 1,2 and 3
Video	From 480i through 1080p
Number of Channels Stored	10.000
Power Supply	AC 100 ~ 240 V 50/60 Hz
Power Consumption	12 V/2A plug adapter: 24 W max (10W in our tests)
Dimensions	220 x 35 x 145 mm

## ENERGY DIAGRAM



First 10 minutes: operate mode, next 5 minutes: standby mode (power saving ON), last 5 minutes: standby mode (power saving OFF).

